

THE Dominion Philatelist

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The Beginner

A paper read before the Toronto Philatelic Club by Dr. A. Boulton.

The great question among the philatelists and philatelic societies seems at present to be how to gain recruits to their ranks, for the true philatelist finds his chief pleasure in comparison, competition and completion, and for these is necessary the fourth C, companionship.

Nothing is so difficult to understand as the "solitary" collector, he, who collects all by himself, hoards up his stamps, and pores over them in his den in a solitary loneliness, missing the double enjoyment of sharing his pleasures and triumphs with companions interested as he is.

A common mistake, however, is often given utterance to, namely how we can get new collectors to recruit or swell our ranks: a glance at our own, or any other society's membership list, or among our acquaintances, shows us the ever changing ranks of philatelists. To be sure there are some, a very few, who are stayers and are always with us, but the changes of value in a popular catalogue over a period of five years, are outshadowed by the changes in a list of philatelists during the same length of time.

Again, if we inquire among our acquaintances, or intimate friends, we find few, if any there are, who have not at some time collected stamps. Therefore, the question is not how to gain new collectors, but how to treat the beginner so as to

make him permanent in our ranks.

For the subject of our paper the beginner can be divided into a junior and senior, in many ways they are identical. The lack of seriousness and the feeling of impossibility to cope with the enormous field of philately seem to be the pit-fall of the junior stamp collector, and it is toward avoiding, or to give a helping hand over these two obstacles, that the earnest philatelist should give his attention.

The first stage of the junior is to get the common stamps of his own and other familiar countries that come in his way without effort, paste them into a waste or half-used account book, without reference to country, arrangement or condition; and it is right here that the lesson can begin. Without tiring or boring a boy, he can be advised, first, as to regularity of arrangement, to place his stamps in line, or even designs, to group them into countries, and further still, into similar types of designs or issues. It is not advisable to go to the extent of having each country on a different page, for nothing looks more hopeless or cheerless than one or two stamps on each page, but to group each of three or four countries on a page. This is likely to increase his interest in his stamps. It is then advisable to point out the value of condition, and to show at least that torn and damaged stamps are of no value, and of the increased value of clean and well centred specimens. But a boy very soon outgrows this stage,

and unless he is kindly encouraged at this point, he loses interest from having reached the limit of his resources, and, marble season coming round, he swaps his collection (?) for a handful of shooters.

It is at this stage that philately loses thousands, even more, probably ninety per cent of its recruits, and, if only ten per cent of them can be saved for permanent collectors, our clubs would need larger meeting rooms, and our dealers would be millionaires. If it is the experience of any of us to meet with a collector at this stage, would it not be well to point out that with the start already gained, a nice collection might be built up in the next stamp season, and advise putting away the nucleus already made along with a promise to initiate him into further stages of the hobby, rather than sacrificing it for the new attraction? It is too much to expect any boy to forego marbles and stick to stamps, when all his play-mates are crying "fan", but the seed of the valuable truth, that what is worth beginning is worth continuing, and what is worth doing is worth doing well, can here be sown. If you are successful, you have made a great gain for philately, and done the boy lasting good, and, when the new stamp season comes around, you can easily lead him into studying more fully with the aid of a catalogue the stamps he already has with a view of arranging and remounting them into another album, even, if a blank account book is still the receptacle. It is to be deplored that the only catalogues easily procurable are far too complicated and bewildering for the beginner, nor does the cheap album with a few illustrations seem of any value, as they are of little assistance as guides leading only to con-

fusion, and the larger and more complete albums only lead back to the original feeling of cheerlessness, from the preponderance of blank spaces, and to our second pit-fall the hopelessness of any approach to completion. But this hopelessness should be turned into a strong argument namely,— the impossibility of anyone forming a complete collection and therefore, by wise limitations, the possibility of completion, within those limits.

This sails closely to the dangerous sands of specialism, which at this stage cannot but be injurious to a philatelist, for the qualification of a good philatelist is to be able to appreciate the good points of any stamp or collection of stamps, and such foundation can only be laid by a general collection during boyhood at least. But a wise limit can be placed, if the coming Croker spends his pocket money on them, in the value of stamps collected, but wiser still, at this age, it is to advise that not one cent be spent on stamps, but that the collector earns his collection. There are two ways this can be done, one by gathering of the current stamps of his country, cleaning, counting and packing them with the chance of picking up many of those of higher value, which he can dispose of to his dealer in exchange for stamps. The second way is to correspond with collectors of foreign countries, and exchange with them such duplicates of stamps of his own country as he may find in his hunts. There are few, if any boys, who cannot get into some large office or bank and find lots to pay them for their inquisitiveness. In this way a keen business instinct and a fairly general knowledge of foreign countries can be formed, and a far greater and more permanent interest in a collection of

stamps can be cultivated than by a mere visit to a local dealer on Saturday morning and the spending of his week's pocket money. Besides there is always the feeling of having earned his collection, and about the proudest collector is the one who can tell you his stamps cost him nothing. In these days of the multiplication of stamps and of issue on issue, a large collection of stamps can be built up in one of these two ways. Perhaps the most important thing to avoid is patronizing a boy, if you do, he will either give up you or his collection in disgust. Those of you who have read Kipling's "Stalky & Co." will remember that the clever illustration of this in

speech to the boys. Do not give him stamps, as we so often hear advised, or pat him on the head, but make him independent by bringing you common stamps in exchange, even if you do not want them. Do not show him your specialized collection and tell him how many fifty-dollar stamps you have, or how many of your single stamps are worth his whole collection. It is wise in dealing with a very young collector to confine yourself to his own collection, using only your own to illustrate arrangement or condition.

To sum up, interest the junior collector by encouragement in the direction of arrangement, neatness and perfection of condition. Teach him independence by letting him earn his stamps, and let him feel that he is just as important as the millionaire who buys "Post-office Mauritius", if he follows out whatever he aims at earnestly. Teach him to avoid specialism, minor varieties, and valuing stamps by their size and beauty, teach him to make a distinct aim in some definite direction in his collection, and to avoid being the cat's paw of every

new fad fostered up to bleed his pocket. If you have succeeded in these, you will have made a philatelist who will come back to the hobby year after year and will eventually burst from the chrysalis of the hobby of stamp collecting into the full fledged butterfly of the science of philately. A few words will suffice the senior philatelist. If by good fortune he has continued steadily from the junior period he is already incurable and does not need our attention. Even if he was not in any way earnest as a boy, as a senior he will be a fairly certain quantity. But many there are who take up philately as a recreation from business rush of the day with very little previous knowledge of the subject. What are their pit-falls? Overeagerness, impatience, ignorance of values, ignorance of the value of condition, more especially in rare stamps, fear of ridicule, absence of the fourth C., companionship. Overeagerness and impatience lead to many an early downfall through buying everything offered, leading to the accumulation of poor specimens and often to the outlay of more money than can be spared which ends in the disposal of the collection and the philatelic death of a promising recruit. Ignorance of value is the greatest stumbling-block of all, for it cannot possibly last forever, and when the victim awakes to find he has been paying through the nose for rubbish, he gives up in disgust. Too often is it the common experience to come across a collector who has been buying largely at ten per cent discount off a thousand variety packet or paying full catalogue for poor specimens, that in good condition can be bought at 33 per cent discount.

The pride of a man is naturally

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THE
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A. M. MUIRHEAD,
PROPRIETOR.
155 Howland Ave., Toronto, Can.

It would seem that our paper enjoys the distinction of being the sole specimen of its class in Canada. We are quite sanguine, however, that there will shortly spring up some philatelic journal to keep us company. We will then be able to stand on our dignity as the "oldest stamp paper in Canada!" Our seismological expert reports ominous rumblings at London, Ont., and the volcanic eruption of a stamp paper is indicated.

President's Address

We are now well into 1904, and are making the history of the Dominion Philatelic Association for another year. This year, our tenth milestone, must stand out in our history. Even if this 1904 does not stand out as a period of great numerical growth and of financial prosperity, it must be worthy of being marked with a white stone as a time in which the D.P.A. rebelled against subvention of its interests to those of private application; as a time when its serious purpose and usefulness to the collector obtained a too-long delayed recognition.

The next convention will be a most important one. It will be held at which ever spot is likeliest to attract the largest number of members. The suggestion of every paid-up member is welcome and solicited. It will soon be necessary for me to name the site of the meet and in selecting the same, I would be glad to hear from as many members as possible.

The business so far done in the various departments is encouraging and members should bear in mind that the purpose for which our officers were elected is to help the membership in the objects for which the Association was organized. The value of stamps in the Sales Department is nearing the 1000 dollar mark; but this is merely a beginning. In the Auction Department is a crying need for good, *saleable* stamps; the Department is able to sell the very best and most desirable stamps at as good a price as could be realized anywhere; it should not be looked upon as a last resort for the disposal of stamps which could not be otherwise sold. What has been said of these departments will equally apply to all. Our officers say: "*Give us your co-operation, and we will do the rest.*"

Suggestions as to how the D.P.A. may be made of greater service to the collector are cordially welcomed, and the members are asked, testing for themselves the many benefits of the D.P.A., to solicit applications for membership from their collecting friends.

A. M. Muirhead

The Dominion Philatelic Association.

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 injured when he meets other collectors, who have the same and better stamps than his own, which they purchased at about half the price, especially if the victim is accustomed to pride himself and is, in his own business, a shrewd businessman. In fact which of us escaped this in our own green days? Ignorance in philately is as harmful to itself as is ignorance in any profession. A collector cannot cut his eye-teeth too soon, he cannot be taught too soon how and what grade and condition of stamps to buy, what market to buy it in, and what price to pay for it. It is a mistake on the part of those who are interested in the sale of stamps to suppose that ignorance on the part of collectors is to their advantage. Is it not better to make ten per cent on \$2000 than fifty per cent on \$200? Is it not better that collectors should have a full and general knowledge of values and market in philately as in any business so that the poor business man and the dishonest in philately should go to the wall as in any other business? To sum up, preach the doctrine of "everything comes to him who waits," encourage the study of everything in connection with stamps, especially the value of condition, create the exchange of ideas and knowledge by regular

intermingling with each, create healthy rivalry and competition.

In no way can these be accomplished so well as by regularly meeting with and exchange of ideas with other collectors, and in no way can this be accomplished so well as by becoming a member of a good stamp-club.

Secretary's Report

NEW MEMBERS

Alfred B. Rozenblott, 171 McCaul St., Toronto.

RESIGNATIONS

Albert Hall, Cambridge, Mass.
 J. H. Riddell, Sunville, Ont.

APPLICATIONS

E. Marks, Euclid Ave., Toronto.
 Age, 26. Occupation, Stamp dealer. References: D. P. Duggan, A. M. Muirhead.

In accordance with the constitution, the above applications are now published. If no objection is received by me within two weeks from date, the applications will be considered accepted, and appear in the next number of the official organ as such.

Dues for 1904 will be payable Jan. 1st, and members are asked to remit same promptly.

For application blanks and all information address.

GEO. A. LOWE, Sec. Treas.
 61 King St. West, Toronto.

D.P.A. AUCTION

Anyone may bid. Each lot is sold as one piece, irrespective of number of stamps. If more than one bid at same price is received, the lot will be awarded to bid first received. Successful bidders are expected to remit on receipt of notice. Bid early. Sale closes Mar 15

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53 Pan-American, 1 unused set.
54 Newfoundland $\frac{1}{2}$ 1235 unused.
55 " " same above used.
56 Canada 2c purple env unused.
57 " 2 on 3 " "
58 " 2 on 3 M. L. 25
59 Transvaal 1d K head 25
60 Jamaica 1d 15
61 Brit Colonies 50 var
62 Canada 15, 50 Jubilee unused.
63 500 Am papers assorted
64 325 Weekly Era.
65 Weekly Era 1901 comp
66 100 English Paper assid.

- Lot
No.
67 85 Foreign Paper Asstd
68 Am. Phil Magazine, complete vol
69 Canada 100-5c 50- $\frac{1}{2}$ c Numeral.
70 " 5-10c 50 maps.
71 " 500-3c '83 100-2c Columbian.
72 Japan 15 sen Cal 150 and 1 Farid Kol P.C. cat 15.
73 Secheilles on Covers 2 on 3, 6, 12, 16.
74 " unused 2, 3, 6, 12, 18.
75 " " 2, 3, 6, 12, 18, 30, 45, 75.
76 Seychelles, unused 75, 1.50, 2.25.
78 British Colonies unused face 30c
79 Canada 50-7c Queen's.
80 " 50-7c King's.
81 5000 Continentals.

Members are requested to forward lots for next sale at once.

CHAS. J. THOMAS, Auc. Mgr.

18 Ottawa St. Toronto.

Librarian's Report

293 King St. West,
Toronto, March 1, 1904.

Fellow members D.P.A.

I beg to state that my department has been somewhat overlooked of late by the members, both in the donations of files and requisitions for books.

I beg to acknowledge from the Rev. W. W. Bolton of Victoria, B. C., volume No. 16 "American Journal of Philately."

I also beg to thank Mr. Ernest F. Wurtelle of Quebec, for a donation of 600 odd pieces of philatelic literature. This donation has never been received by the library on account, I am lead to understand of the late Secretary-Treasurer stating to Mr. Wurtelle that I had moved, and requested that donation be sent in his care. This was done, but the Librarian was not made aware of such donation, until several months after its receipt, and on its receipt of this information he wrote to Mr. Wurtelle to have do-

nation confirmed. But by this time the late Secretary-Treasurer's whereabouts were unknown and the donation to the library had disappeared also. This is indeed to be regretted as such a loss would be almost irreparable.

It is to be hoped that the members will at once seek to enliven our Association and each endeavor to secure several new members and thereby push our society to the fore. Who will be first?

Yours fraternally,

R. F. WRIGLEY,
Librarian.

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